

Document 24 of 112 FBIS Concatenated Daily Reports, 1989 Page 1

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Headline: Cristiani Statement on Murder Investigation

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FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE:

1. [Text] San Salvador, 19 Nov (EFE)--Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani stated today that the Armed Forces High Command "does not dismiss" the possibility that those who instigated the assassination of the six Jesuits on 16 November could have been military.
2. "The High Command members do not dismiss the possibility that the perpetrators could be Army members, and are ready to get to the bottom of things so that they will be punished," the Salvadoran president said in statements to EFE and other media.
3. Cristiani, who insisted on the necessity of "not jumping to hasty conclusions," added that "the Armed Forces do not want the institute, per se, to suffer the consequences of what its members do as individuals."
4. On 16 November six Jesuit priests, five of them Spaniards, were assassinated by uniformed men who machinegunned them in their residence that morning, while a rigid curfew was in effect in El Salvador.
5. The Jesuits, who had lived in El Salvador for many years, were staunch critics of the military regimes and of the extreme rightist sectors of the country.
6. According to Cristiani, "the Armed Forces High Command, of which the president is a part, are totally determined to investigate and clear up the assassination of the Jesuits."
7. Interviewed shortly after meeting with Inocencio Arias, Spanish under secretary of foreign relations, Cristiani asked that Spain, the United States, and Great Britain participate in the investigation of the assassination "by sending experts."
8. The Salvadoran president described the attitude of those persons in the United States who have hinted at the possibility of suspending the \$1 million daily aid given to El Salvador as "very simplistic."
9. "I trust that this will not be so and I have information that the large majority of U.S. political leaders do not feel that way," the president added.

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Date

MAY 1994

14

Document 24 of 112 FBIS Concatenated Daily Reports, 1989 Page 2

10. Thus far, the autopsies performed on the Jesuits by three U.S. pathologists ``are not conclusive in determinining guilt,'' the president added.

11. Cristiani had words of praise for Ignacio Ellacuria, one of the Jesuits killed, ``who had become a constructive opposer of the Salvadoran Government,'' according to him.

12. Salvadoran television, which has been state-controlled since the guerrilla offensive started 1 week ago, carried some clips of Ellacuria in which he requested applause for Cristiani at an event held some months ago in the University of El Salvador.

13. Some Salvadoran rightist sectors have publicly accused the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerillas of being behind the Jesuits' killing.

14. Ellacuria told EFE, 4 days before he was killed, that Cristiani represents ``the civilian sector'' of the ruling ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] Party, in contrast with two others whom he described as ``militarists'' and ``death squad-oriented.''

15. ``ARENA, per se, has nothing to do with violent incidents,'' Cristiani said, commenting on Ellacuria's appraisal and adding that ``obviously there are violent groups in the country, but they are not known to the government or to ARENA.